

**1. How will you support naloxone distribution and overdose education for the City of Chicago?**

As Mayor I would direct the Chicago Department of Public Health to spearhead a program of public education and training regarding drug overdoses and Naxelone. The need for this training is great and we should begin with high priority populations. For example as not for profit housing agencies are being directed to implement harm reduction strategies as they admit new tenants, their staff fear accepting responsibility for tenants who may relapse and overdose. Appropriate education and training will help staff and supporting volunteers serve a vulnerable population safely. Peer counselors and people with lived experience who work on street engagement must have this training. If this education and training is successful it will strengthen the case for medicaid reimbursement for peer support workers and other paraprofessionals.

From there education and training should be offered to increasing numbers of professionals, para professionals and volunteers with an ever broadening reach. Many overdoses occur in public restrooms, in parks, and on public transit. While the general public cannot be realistically armed with Naxelone, they should understand it, support it's use and know how to get help. A good analogy is the embrace of the Heimlich Maneuver now understood by millions.

**2. How will you support expanded access to MAT?**

As County Board President I championed providing behavioral health care, supported by physical health care, in every community. The expansion of medicaid through County Care changed lives and brought vulnerable people out of the criminal justice system where they had never belonged. Supporting access to MAT is the natural extension of this work because it gives every person struggling with addiction a realistic path to health and recovery. The barriers to MAT go beyond access to treatment and issues of cost and service delivery because many people

have misconceptions about MAT. My role as mayor will provide me with a prominent platform for addressing these dangerous prejudices. I will help the treatment community make the case for MAT where and when it is appropriate.

**3. How will you support the legalization of sterile syringe access for Chicago as well as statewide? How will you ensure that the City of Chicago continues to publicly fund sterile syringes for distribution?**

As Mayor I would work to insure that sterile syringe access is legal throughout Illinois. It is important to build a statewide consensus. To that end I would ask the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority to sponsor sterile syringe access sites across Illinois to demonstrate their efficacy. I believe demonstration sites that yield both good immediate results and careful longer term studies would convince many stakeholders of the usefulness of this approach. I would look to our new Governor J.B. Pritzker to introduce statewide legislation to support sterile syringe access. I would reach out to my counterparts throughout the state to gather support for this legislation.

**4. Due to federal drug laws, such sites would ideally be placed on city property. What will you do to support the creation of a publicly-funded pilot OPC in the City of Chicago?**

As Mayor, I would support a review of existing research and assessment of having an Overdose Prevention Center (OPC) in a city owned site. It would be necessary to locate an appropriate location for the OPC that is away from vulnerable populations including young people and senior citizens. The location would have to be chosen to discourage the concentration of street dealing near the OPC which would create public safety challenges. The community would have to be a willing partner that receives substantial support in recognition of importance and potential risk that come with this endeavor. I believe an OPC will be more

likely to be welcomed if the city has demonstrated through the expansion of treatment options the ability to truly tackle the opioid and opiate epidemic.

**5. What will you do to support decriminalization of all drug consumption and possession city-wide, particularly in communities hardest hit by the War on Drugs? Furthermore, how will you ensure Black and Latino-led organizations are included in all decision making?**

I have consistently and publically supported the decriminalization of all drugs for decades and have been severely criticized for taking this stand. I believe the tide of public opinion is turning and we are ready to take some basic first steps. I will work to ensure the organizations that truly represent black and brown residents play a central role in dismantling the harsh systems that penalized drug use and that their guidance is relied upon to build a new rehabilitative system. Whenever possible income from legal drug sales should be used to rebuild struggling communities who have been the hardest hit by the War on Drugs. In addition to investing in supportive services, community infrastructure and economic opportunity, expungement and related relief must be available to every resident and their families who have been affected by harsh drug laws.

**6. In what ways will you support the elimination of drug-induced homicide laws?**

As Mayor, I would work with allies and partners to further educate the public and legislators regarding the unintended negative impacts of drug-induced homicide laws. I believe with further education and awareness we can work in Springfield to eliminate such laws that jeopardize not only the individual who may be over-dosing but also those who attempt to intervene to assist. Locally, I would meet with the State's Attorney Office and other criminal justice stakeholders to find common ground that balanced prosecutorial discretion with the need to ensure we are not imposing greater harm and risk of death to those struggling with addiction.

